

## Health Advisory:

### Emergency MedKit Pilot Behavioral Research Study

May 25, 2006

This document will be updated as new information becomes available. The current version can always be viewed at <http://www.dhss.mo.gov>

The Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS) is now using 4 types of documents to provide important information to medical and public health professionals, and to other interested persons:

**Health Alerts** convey information of the highest level of importance which warrants immediate action or attention from Missouri health providers, emergency responders, public health agencies, and/or the public.

**Health Advisories** provide important information for a specific incident or situation, including that impacting neighboring states; may not require immediate action.

**Health Guidances** contain comprehensive information pertaining to a particular disease or condition, and include recommendations, guidelines, etc. endorsed by DHSS.

**Health Updates** provide new or updated information on an incident or situation; can also provide information to update a previously sent Health Alert, Health Advisory, or Health Guidance; unlikely to require immediate action.

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May 25, 2006

**FROM: JULIA M. ECKSTEIN  
DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: Emergency MedKit Pilot Behavioral Research Study**

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are partnering on a pilot behavioral research study to assess the feasibility, safety, acceptability, and usefulness of placing an Emergency MedKit in people's homes to be immediately available in case of a bioterrorism threat. The antibiotics – doxycycline or ciprofloxacin – in the MedKit are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for post-exposure inhalational anthrax prophylaxis. The purpose of the study is to examine the extent to which people with diverse backgrounds follow instructions concerning appropriate storage and reserving the medicine for emergency preparedness use only. Participants in the study will **not** be instructed to take the medication.

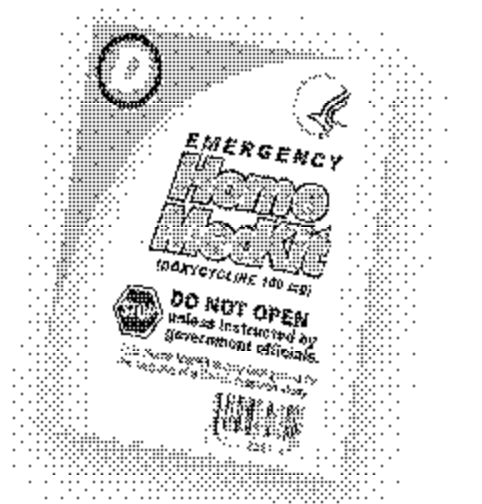
The study began the week of May 15, 2006, and will include approximately 5,000 households in the St. Louis area. The entire study will take approximately one year to complete.

This Health Advisory is being sent to familiarize physicians with the study in case they receive questions from patients, or possibly become involved in the evaluation and management of an individual (such as a child) who has ingested some of the medication in the Emergency MedKit.

Each household participating in the study will receive an Emergency MedKit. The MedKit will contain one specially designed cardboard blister pack of medication for each member of the household. Each blister pack contains a five-day course of antibiotics – either:

- a) doxycycline – ten 100mg tablets, or
- b) ciprofloxacin – ten 500mg tablets.

The blister pack(s) is contained in a transparent plastic, tamper-evident, sealed bag with instructions affixed to the outside.



Each study household will be provided one blister pack for every household member (i.e., a household with four persons will be given a total of four blister packs contained in a single sealed bag).

Findings from the study will help policy makers and emergency preparedness planners make evidence-based decisions related to the safety, acceptability, and usefulness of the Emergency MedKit as a supplemental emergency preparedness strategy for the nation. This study was not prompted by any particular threat. For more information, contact the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Center for Emergency Response and Terrorism, at 573-526-4768.

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